



The Monthly Dirt

A monthly newsletter on the California Construction General Permit

Once in a while we need to step back and look at the big picture. Sometimes we can get so caught up in REAPs, wattles, and runoff that we forget the “why”. Why are we doing all of this stuff and what are we trying to protect? Let us acquaint you to three species that depend on you and your wattles.

Have you ever wondered why some areas of your project are delineated with that orange “snow fence” or ESA (environmentally sensitive area) fencing? Or have you ever had your site shut down for a “nesting period”? According to the Construction General Permit, environmentally sensitive areas surrounding a construction site must be identified and protected from the nearby construction activities because these areas are habitats for some pretty incredible creatures. While it may seem like a pain to have a construction site shut down to accommodate these little creatures, isn’t that the point of protecting storm water and the environment? In this month’s edition of **The Monthly Dirt**, we going to hear from some of the biologists who you may see at your project and find out what they are doing to protect salmon, salamanders, and steelhead ... as well as many other species who call your project “home”.

PERMITS Aside from the Construction General Permit, there are a number of other permits which further outline how to protect the environment.

Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the State Water Board is a permit which regulates any project that may discharge dredge or fill material into navigable waters. Section 401 of the CWA (Clean Water Act) applies to any project that has the potential of a pollutant laden discharge into surrounding wetlands. The goal of Section 401 is to ensure that water quality is protected and that the water can support human, plant, and animal life.

404 Dredge and Fill Permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers states that no discharge of dredge or fill material is permitted if there are alternative discharge practices available which are less damaging to the environment, or if the discharge is too degrading to the environment. *Note: “dredge or fill” includes any material you take out of or put into a*

water way—including armoring a bank with rip rap rock.

Section 1600—Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement from the State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife is a permit that is required for any project that disturbs where a waterway is flowing (or once flowed). This permit specifically regulates any

changes made to the bank, bed, channel, natural water flow of any river, stream or lake (including dry beds). Also included in this permit are the requirements for the depositing, disposing, or use of material from any river, stream or lake. *Remember: these rivers, streams and lakes are often environmentally sensitive areas that impact not only the plants, fish and wildlife living*

The Monthly Dirt
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▶ Performing a protocol survey after a recent rain event for California Tiger Salamanders.

within them, but also our own food systems!

EXCLUSION The purpose of exclusion methods are to prevent environmentally sensitive animals from entering the project site, and construction activities from entering or damaging an area outside the project limits. *The goal being to leave the area and ecosystem as close to how it was before the project began.* Some exclusions are used to prevent wildlife from entering a site and delaying construction or demolition activities, and some exclusion methods are to stop the disruptive construction activities during nesting/mating/hibernation periods. Exclusion methods include ESA fencing, silt fences, and restrictions on project scheduling. Exclusion implementation generally revolves around the life cycles of birds, bats, fish, amphibians, and reptiles. In the fall and spring, under-bridge exclusions must be in place to prevent bird nesting and bat roosting if demolition or construction is occurring later that year. Silt fences are used to keep reptiles and amphibians from entering a job site, plus, they double as a barrier which protects fish and their sensitive eggs from any sedimentation from the construction site.



▶ Installing bird and bat exclusions under a bridge.

CLEAR WATER DIVERSION When in-water work needs to be conducted, special methods are used to protect the waterbodies and habitats. On some sites, sampling is conducted every 4 hours during in-water work to ensure sediment buildup doesn't exceed a set limit. Sedimentation can choke out fish and prevent fish eggs from hatching. For more invasive projects, a complete stream diversion may be necessary. According to section NS-5 of the CASQA BMP Handbook, "Clear water diversion consists of a system of structures and measures that intercept clear surface water runoff upstream of a project site, transport it around the work area, and discharge it downstream with minimal water quality degradation of either the project construction operations or the construction of the diversion." This method is often used to avoid work delays due to fish spawning seasons and other seasonal and wildlife delays.

WHY DOES IT MATTER? In an effort to protect the environment, permits, exclusions, and water diversions are used to prevent work delays and protect the surrounding environment and wildlife from unnecessary interference. The removal of even one species can upset the balance and cause irreparable damage to the water body and its beneficial uses. But through the collaborative efforts of contractors, engineers, biologists, and water quality specialists, the delicate balance of the ecosystem can be protected. - MD

Thank you to guest writer Danielle Villalpando, biologist with Endemic Environmental Services and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Upcoming Live Online Events:
April 27-29, 2021: Online QSP/QSD Class
Register Here: wgr-sw.com/training

Watch these videos about efforts to protect threatened species ...
(Viewing these and reading this newsletter, can qualify for a free PDH.)



Need a SWPPP or QSP Inspector?
Call us for a free quote.

Please contact us if you have any questions ...

The Monthly Dirt

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Endemic Environmental Services



Our goal is to navigate environmental challenges with innovative solutions

SERVICES WE OFFER TO CLIENTS

Endemic Environmental Services (EES) staff are dedicated to providing customized and goal-oriented solutions that support the needs of our state and local clients in cooperation with ecological awareness and environmental integrity.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

We offer a broad range of ecological knowledge and services that can be applied and tailored to your needs. The Endemic Team has state and federal Scientific Collecting Permits for general and focused surveys for nesting birds, special-status wildlife species, and rare plants throughout California. Our firm is unique in that we are also able to provide land maintenance and vegetation control services in-house to save you time and money. Our solution-oriented approach aims to help our clients navigate regulatory processes while avoiding and minimizing environmental impacts to protect and conserve our natural resources.

EES CAPABILITIES:

- Environmental compliance with regulations and specifications
- Preconstruction surveys and studies
- Nesting bird surveys
- Special-status species surveys
- Presence/Absence Surveys
- Trapping and Handling Services
- Pit-trapping, cover board surveys, and visual surveys
- Radio-telemetry and tagging
- Rare plant surveys
- Wetlands assessments
- Ecological risk assessments

CONSULTING SERVICES

Navigating environmental law and regulatory requirements can be a daunting task without trusted and reliable consulting. Our team makes it easy by delivering streamlined documentation, project management, and agency collaboration to pave the way for the successful completion of project goals in compliance with regulatory processes. We analyze environmental law documents, prepare high quality reports, and conduct impact assessments to create solutions for a variety of local, regional, state and federal projects. We have strong and established relationships with the regulatory agencies that facilitate clear expectations and understanding of the specifications, protections, and regulations of each project.

WATER RESOURCES

Our skilled team of marine and freshwater biologists perform a wide variety of hydrological assessments and aquatic surveys. We provide real-time analytics for water monitoring and sampling, fish surveys, and rapid bioassessment. We have extensive experience with in-water monitoring, sampling, and analysis. Aquatic stream bed and creek bed surveys can be performed depending on natural conditions.

EES CAPABILITIES:

- Assist in Clean Water Act Permitting and Compliance
- Assist in California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Streambed Alteration Agreements
- CEQA/NEPA compliance
- Mitigate Negative Declarations (MNDs), Negative Declarations (NDs)
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIAs, EIRs and EAs)
- Due diligence reviews
- Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) compliance
- Wetlands Permitting and Delineation
- Unmanned Aerial/Drone Imaging



EES CAPABILITIES:

- Water resource reviews
- Fisheries/aquatic habitat assessment
- Temporary Creek Diversion Plans
- Water quality monitoring/sampling
- Eelgrass surveys
- Marine and aquatic surveys
- Dredging surveys and sampling
- Deep ocean, intertidal and marsh zone sampling



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NEW

CALTRANS WPCM 8 HOUR TRAINING CLASS



On January 21 2020, Caltrans issued a Revised Standard Specification (RSS) 13-1.01D, detailing the requirements for Water Pollution Control Managers (WPCM) to complete required training prior to working on Caltrans projects. All projects awarded after July 5, 2020 include this RSS.

To become a WPC manager, alternate WPC manager, or Assistant manager for Caltrans construction projects, you must submit a certificate of completion of an 8-hour Water Pollution Control Manager training course.

▶ **SIGN UP TODAY** ◀
@ www.veruxinc.com

Click on "Book Training Class" to sign up.

Please call or email Bob Shults for additional details or to request a class in your facility or area.

 info@veruxinc.com

 916.850.5758

Even with current COVID protocols, safe in-person training is available at the Verux training facility. Alternatively, please contact Bob Shults about traveling to your location.

“

Best storm water class I have attended. Bob knows Caltrans and kept us engaged for eight hours, which is tough to do!

—Dave Cox, Estimator/Project Manager
George Reed, Inc.

Bob's WPCM training course is exceptional! Bob is very engaging and his extensive experience in construction storm water management resonates with our engineers.

—Candice Longnecker
Valley Region Environmental Manager, Granite Construction

Bob Shults integrates 20+ years of construction management and storm water consulting experience into this training. Hands on exercises and real world examples add value to the class throughout.



Bob Shults, PE,
QSD, CGP ToR, Caltrans WPCM Trainer



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CHOOSE GREEN PRACTICES:

Reduce, reuse, recycle. Conserve water usage by installing water efficient appliances and fixtures, and using smart irrigation systems for water landscaping. Conserve electricity. Practice Good Housekeeping BMPs such as dry sweeping and vacuuming. Use naturally derived pesticides or alternative weed extermination. Implement LID features in landscaping. Use LED lighting. Go solar powered. Do regular maintenance on equipment and vehicles to prevent leaks or spills. Properly implement your facility's storm water program.

CHOOSE GREEN PRODUCTS:

Choose safe products - cleaners, soaps, pesticides, absorbents, air fresheners, disinfectants, and etc. Opt for purchasing recycled products such as paper, office supplies, paper towels, and etc. When replacing lighting fixtures or appliances choose ones that are energy efficient and water conserving. Buy some indoor plants - they clean the air of pollutants and give off oxygen.



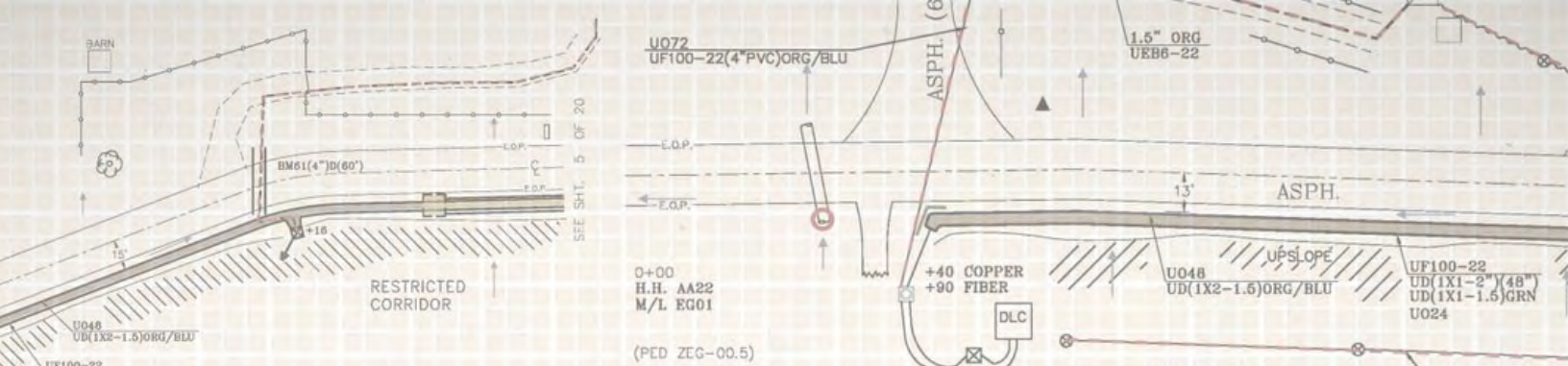
DO YOUR RESEARCH:

Don't get greenwashed. Do your research and find out which products are safe to use, what products aren't safe to use, and what ingredients in those soaps, cleaning products, and foods products are harmful for you and for the environment.

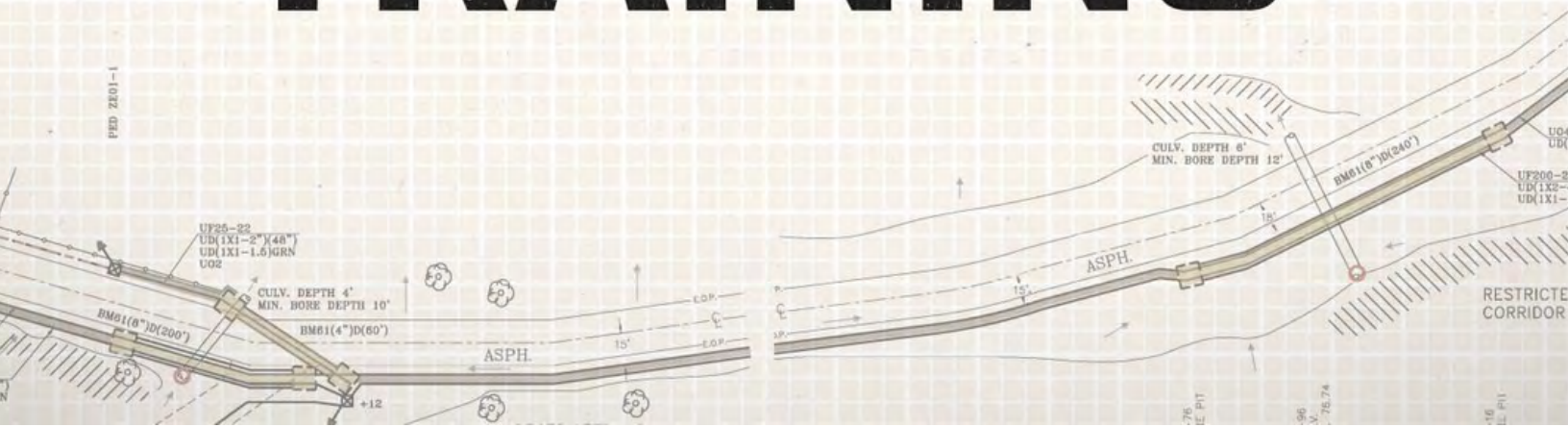
Download the free app from the EWG (Environmental Working Group). It allows you to scan products and see their toxicity ratings, browse safe products, and learn more about choosing safe and eco-friendly products.

Get the app: www.ewg.org/apps
Browse the EWG website: www.ewg.org

go green: protect the environment, your loved ones, and you.



ONLINE QSP/QSD TRAINING



APRIL 27-29, 2021

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